



Litchfield

Wetland Management District | Minnesota



A UNIT OF THE
National Wildlife
Refuge System

The Fire Program in Every Season

History of Fire

The tallgrass prairie landscape was historically maintained by wildfires. Over time, the landscape has been farmed or allowed to succeed to forest in some areas.

We mimic the positive effects of wildfire by safely conducting controlled burns, with strict prescriptions for weather conditions (temperature, humidity, wind), number of firefighters, and equipment. Ideally, most sites are burned on a 5 or 8 year rotation.

Fire requires a lot of planning, preparation, staff, and time. However, the variety of benefits for habitat and wildlife are worth it!



Creating a fire break in cattails with a Marsh Master (Fall 2016)



Prescribed fire (Spring 2016)

Why do prescribed burns?

The main objectives of the National Wildlife Refuge System are to restore and manage wildlife habitat.

Benefits of Fire in the Prairie

- Stimulates germination of some grasses & forbs
- Recycles nutrients back to the soil
- Reduces invasive plant populations
- Kills shrubs and young trees



Monitoring a prescribed fire

Seasons of Fire Management

Fall

- Prescribed burns
- Prepare fire breaks

Winter

- Draft burn plans

Spring

- Prescribed burns

Summer

- Wildfire season
- Prepare fire breaks